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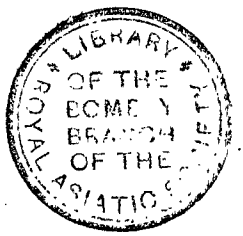

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SELF-PURIFICATION.

EXTERNAL nature is but the shadow of God,—the soul His image. The chief, the special mirror, is the rational soul seeking itself. If the invisible things of God are understood and clearly seen by the things which have been made, where, I ask, rather than in His image within us, can be found more deeply imprinted the knowledge of Him?

Whoever, therefore, thirsteth to see his God, *let him cleanse from every stain his mirror, let him purify his heart by faith.*

ST. BERNARD.

SELF-PURIFICATION.

1.

To rest on the Law is one of the secrets of peace, to trust it utterly at all times, not least when the gloom descends.

No soul that aspires can ever fail to rise; no heart that loves can ever be abandoned.

Difficulties exist only that in overcoming them we may grow strong, and they only who have suffered are able to save.

MRS. BESANT'S

"Some difficulties of the Inner Life,"
on page 139 of "Some Problems of Life."

2.

Unseen it helpeth ye with faithful hands,
Unheard it speaketh stronger than the storm.
Pity and Love are man's because long stress
Moulded blind mass to form.

EDWIN ARNOLD.

3.

Enter the Path: *Far hath he gone whose foot*
Treads down one fond offence.

EDWIN ARNOLD.

4.

If you should fail ten times, do not be disheartened; if you should fail a hundred times, rise up and pursue your way; if you should fail a thousand times, do not despair.

When the right Path is entered *success is sure if the Path is not utterly abandoned.*

First strife, and then victory. First labour, and then rest. First weakness, and then strength. In the beginning the lower life, and the glare and confusion of battle, and at the end the Life Beautiful, the Silence, and the Peace.

JAMES ALLEN'S

"Out from the Heart," pages 51 and 52.

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5.

Blessed are the PURE IN HEART for they shall see God.
MATT. v. 8.

6.

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, *let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit,* perfecting holiness in the fear of God.
2. COR. 7. 1.

7.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not appear what we shall be;

But we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him;
for we shall see Him as He is.

8.

And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.
I. JOHN. III. 2, 3.

9.

And ye know that He was manifested *to take away our sins;* and in Him is no sin.

Whosoever abideth in Him *sinneth not; whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him,* neither known Him.
I. JOHN. III. 5, 6.

10.

Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for *His seed remaineth in him;* for he cannot sin because he is born of God.
Verse 9.

11.

Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.
Verse 10

12.

He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

Verse 14.

13.

But whoso hath this world's goods and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

Verse 17.

14.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and *every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.*

He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for GOD IS LOVE.

I. JOHN. IV. 7, 8.

15.

If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us.

I. JOHN. IV. 12.

16.

God is Love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

I. JOHN. IV. 16.

17.

If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

I. JOHN. IV. 20.

18.

"No one could tell me where my soul might be;
I searched for God, but God eluded me;
I sought my brother out, and found all three."

ANON.

19.

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world:
And *this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*

I. JOHN. v. 4.

20.

Oh ye that love the Eternal, see that ye hate the thing that is evil!

PSALMS—XCVII. 10.

21.

To him that ordereth his conversation aright shall be shown the salvation of God.

PSALMS—L. 23.

22.

Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us.

HEBREWS. XII. 1.

23.

Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before.

PHILIP. 3, 13.

24.

Look not mournfully into the Past.
It comes not back again.
Wisely improve the Present. It is thine.
Go forth to meet the Shadowy Future
Without fear and with a manly heart.

Quoted as a motto to LONGFELLOW'S
"Hyperion."

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25.

If it were possible to place ourselves in thought at a centre in space from which we might see the course of evolution, * * * * we might figure the whole in a picture.

I see a great mountain standing in space, with a road that winds round the mountain, round and round, until the summit is reached.

* * * * *

As we trace the road upwards along this spiral track we see how it ends at the summit of the mountain—that it leads to a mighty Temple, a temple as of white marble, radiant, which stands there shining out against the ethereal blue.

That Temple is the goal of the pilgrimage, and *they who are in it have finished their course—finished it so far as that mountain is concerned—and remain there only for the help of those who are still climbing.*

If we look more closely at the Temple, if we try and see how that Temple is built, we shall see in the midst of it a Holy of Holies, and round about the centre are Courts, four in number, ringing the Holy of Holies as concentric circles, and these are all within the Temple; a wall divides each Court from its neighbours, and to pass from Court to Court, the wayfarer must go through a gateway, and *there is but one in each encircling wall.*

So all who would reach the centre must pass through these four gateways, *one by one.*

And outside the Temple there is yet another enclosure—the Outer Court—and that Court has in it many more than are seen within the Temple itself.

Looking at the Temple and the Courts and the mountain road that winds below, we see this picture of human evolution, and the track along which the race is tending, and the Temple that is its goal.

And along that road round the mountain stands a vast mass of human beings, *climbing indeed, but climbing so slowly*, rising step by step; sometimes it seems as though for every step forward there is a step backward, and *though the trend of the whole mass is upwards, it mounts so slowly that the pace is scarcely perceptible.*

26.

And this *æonian evolution of the race, climbing ever upwards,* seems so slow and weary and painful, that one wonders how the pilgrims have the heart to climb so long * * * * Watching them, we ask ourselves: why is it that they climb so slowly?

* * * * *

Looking at them, it seems that *they travel so slowly because they see not their goal, and understand not the direction in which they are travelling.*

And as we watch one or another on the pathway, we see that *they are always straying aside,* attracted hither and thither, and *with no purpose in their going;*
they walk not straight onwards as though intent on business, but wander hither and thither, like children running after a blossom here, and chasing a butterfly there.

So that all the time seems to be wasted, and but little progress is made when the night falls upon them and the day's march is over.

27.

There are briefer ways that wind not round the hill *but go straight up its side,* paths that may be climbed *if a traveller's heart be brave and if his limbs be strong.* The first step is taken off this long spiral round when some soul that has been travelling round and round, for millenniums perhaps, *recognises for the first time a purpose in the journey,* and catches for a moment a gleam from the Temple on the summit.

After that first momentary glimpse, he is never again quite as he was before. For, though but for a moment, he has recognised a goal and an ending.

MRS. BESANT'S
"In the Outer Court,"
pages 9 to 13.

28.

There comes a time, when Ishvara diligently sought, reverently worshipped, *persistently followed*, though yet he was not seen, reveals himself to his worshipper, and the Supreme is seen. *Then comes a change over the life;* then a new element enters into the heart; there sweeps over the man a wave of emotion and he is never again the same as he was before.

When the Supreme has been seen, though only a glimpse of his beauty be caught, though only one gleam of that glory has come down and touched the heart of the devotee, the inner man is changed; the whole heart is revolutionised; *the back is turned upon the Externalities of the Earth*, and without effort the face is turned to God.

MRS. BESANT'S
"The Three Paths," page 65.

29.

When a soul has caught these glimpses of its goal and of the direct pathway that leads towards it, then it understands from that moment that the pathway has a name, and that the name is "SERVICE," and that those who enter on that shorter pathway must enter it through a gate on which "SERVICE OF MAN" is shining in golden letters; it understands that before it can reach even the Outer Court of the Temple, it must pass through that gateway, and *realize that life is meant for service, and not for self-seeking*, and that the only way to climb upwards more swiftly is to climb for the sake of those

who are lagging in order that from the Temple more effective help may be sent down to the climbers than otherwise would be possible.

30.

These souls who have just for a moment recognised that there is a goal and purpose in life begin *to climb with more steadfastness* than their fellows; although they are still winding their way round the hill, we see that *they begin to practise more steadily what we recognize as virtues*, and that they give themselves more persistently to what we recognise as *religion, which is trying to tell them how they may climb, and how the Temple may finally be won.*

31.

They travel more swiftly *because there is more purpose in their travelling*, because they are taking a direction which they begin to understand, and they begin, though very imperfectly, *to walk with a definite aim, and try to live with a definite purpose.*

* * * * *

32.

They are no longer *roaming aimlessly* from side to side, sometimes a little upwards and sometimes a little downwards; *they are now climbing steadily up* the winding pathway, and each day of life sees them climb a little faster until they are distinctly ahead of the multitudes in

1. Spirituality of life,
2. In the practice of virtue, and
3. In the growing desire to be of service to their fellowmen.

33.

They are beginning *to try and train themselves in definite ways;* they are beginning also to try and help their neighbours that they too may climb with them,

And as they are making their way a little more swiftly forward, *they are always reaching out helping hands to those around them,* and trying to take them upwards more swiftly along the path.

MRS. BESANT'S
"In the Outer Court,"
pages 13 to 16.

34.

Hard enough is it to find the way to the Outer Court; difficult enough is it to practise religion and all the virtues, which make the human soul fit even to knock at the gateway of this outer stage, this Outer Court around the Temple, and they who enter into that Court have made great progress in their past;

It may be, it will be, that to some the life that is led therein may scarce seem attractive—to some who have not definitely recognized the aim and the end of life. For mind you, none are in the Outer Court save

(1) *those who have definitely vowed themselves to Service,*

(2) *those who have given away everything, and who have asked for nothing in return save the privilege of serving,*

(3) *who have definitely recognized the transitory nature of earthly things,*

(4) *who have definitely embraced the task which they desire to achieve,*

(5) *who have turned their backs on the flowery Paths which go up the mountain, and are resolutely determined to climb straight upwards, no matter what the cost, no matter what the strain as day after day of life swiftly succeed each other.*

There is to be struggle, and much of struggle, in this Outer Court, for much has to be done therein in brief space of time.

Pages 19 and 20.

35.

Purification is to be part of its work, self-purification, the purification of the lower nature, until every part of it vibrates perfectly in harmony with the higher, until everything is pure that belongs to the temporary part of man, to that which we call the personality, that which has not in it the permanent individual, but is only the assemblage of qualities and characteristics, which that individual gathers round it in the course of each of its many lives—all the outer qualities and attributes round the soul, all these garments in which it clothes itself, and which it carries with it often life after life, all that which it builds during incarnation, all that which the permanent individuality gathers round itself during earth life and out of which it extracts the essence in order to transfuse it into its own growing and Eternal Self.

36.

A phrase that very well symbolises the position of the Soul at this moment, when it has deliberately entered the Outer Court and sees the work stretching in front of it, a phrase that very well describes its attitude has been used lately by Mr. Sinnett. It is the phrase of "*allegiance to the Higher Self*," a useful expression, if it be understood.

37.

It means *the deliberate decision that all that is temporary and that belongs to the lower personality shall be cast aside;* that each life that has to be lived in this lower world *shall be devoted to the single purpose of gathering together material which is useful,* which then shall be handed on to the Higher One who lives and grows out of that which the lower gathers; that the lower self—realising that it is essentially one with the greater that is above it, that its only work in the world is to come here as the temporary active agency which gathers together that of which the permanent self has need—*determines that the whole of its life down here shall be spent in that service,* and that the life's purpose is merely the gathering of material which shall then be taken back to the Higher, who is really the essence of itself, and who shall thus be enabled to build up the ever-growing individuality which is higher than the personality of a life.

38.

The " allegiance to the Higher Self " means the recognition of this service by the lower, *the living of the lower no longer for itself* but for the purpose of serving that which endures; so that all the life in the Outer Court is to be this life of definite allegiance to the Higher, and all the work that is done in the Outer Court is to be work that is done for the sake of that greater one, who is now realised as the true Self that is to endure throughout the ages, and that is to be built ever into fuller and fuller life by this deliberate, loyal service of the messenger that it sends into the outer world.

Pages 21 to 23.

39.

If a man would find the Soul, the first thing to do is to " CEASE FROM EVIL WAYS."

40.

But this I am presuming the Soul has done ere it has entered the Outer Court. For those who enter the Outer Court are no longer subject to the commonest temptations of earth-life; they have grown beyond those, and when they come into the incarnation which is to see them within the Outer Court, *they will at least have turned from evil ways and will have ceased from walking therein with pleasure.*

Page 23.

41.

The first step is purification of the life and the ceasing from wicked ways.

42.

Nothing but talk is possible until a man has begun to purify his life; until he is truthful in thought as well as in speech;
until he cannot be persuaded to swerve from the path of rectitude by any outside temptations;
until the whole of his thought and desire is at least towards the right;
until, however often he falls, he recognizes a fall as a fall, and *tries to rise again;* until he has made the attempt at least to form a righteous ideal and to carry out that ideal practically in life;

The discipline of the body and the mind is the first stage in practical Yoga.

MRS. BESANT'S

"Yoga" in the "Building of the Kosmos,"

Pages 56 and 57.

43.

There is no way to the Place of Peace save the narrow ancient way.

To leave off all evil ways:
To be actively pure, helpful, self-sacrificing:
It is all laid down in the books.
But reading the books is not enough.
There must be the definite practice of the precepts laid down in them.
You know theoretically, if you have read these books, how to purify yourself.

The thing is now to do.

MRS. BESANT: [Private Letter.]

44.

Take one fault: choose its opposite virtue to meditate on every morning and to practise during the day. In some weeks or months the fault will be replaced by the virtue.

MRS. BESANT: [Private Letter.]

45.

The following of the worse where the better is seen is the sign that the inheritance of the past is still stronger than the new-born wish for higher things: *but the presence of that wish is the promise of the future, and if it be encouraged and made constant, it will outwear the old.*

MRS. BESANT: [Private Letter.]

"And drugged with poisonous drink, the soul departs,
And, fierce with thirst to drink, Karma returns;
Sense-struck again the Sodden Self begins,
And new deceits it earns."

ARNOLD'S "Light of Asia."

The "Sodden Self" is awakened when it sees the better and *may be made strong to act by efforts after the better; these efforts may be stimulated by thought of the better, steady and persistent, so that it becomes more and more attractive.*

MRS. BESANT: [Private Letter.]

46.

The best way to overcome a besetting sin is to give five minutes every morning to steady thought of the opposite virtue. During the day, take any opportunity of practising the opposite virtue.

MRS. BESANT: [Private Letter.]

47.

A man comes into the world with certain inborn mental faculties, let us say of an average type, with a passional nature that shows definite characteristics, some good, some bad; with an etheric double and physical body fairly well formed and healthy, but of no specially splendid character.

These are his limitations, clearly marked out for him, and he finds himself when he reaches manhood with this mental, passional, astral, physical "stock-in-hand," and *he has to do the best he can with it.*

There are many mental heights that he is definitely unable to climb, mental conceptions which his powers do not permit him to grasp: there are temptations to which his passional nature yields, though he strives against them; there are triumphs of physical strength and skill that he cannot achieve; in fact, he finds that he can no more think as a genius thinks than he can be beautiful as an Apollo. *He is within a limited ring and cannot pass out of it, long as he may for liberty.*

Moreover, he cannot avoid troubles of many kinds; they strike him, and he can only bear his pain; he cannot escape from it.

Now these things are so.

The man is limited by his past thoughts, by his wasted opportunities, by his mistaken choices, by his foolish yieldings; he is bound by his forgotten desires, *enchained by his errors of an earlier day*, and yet *he* is not bound, the Real Man.

He who made the past that imprisons his present, can work within the prison-house and create a future of liberty.

Nay, let him *know* that he himself is free, and the fetters will crumble away from his limbs, and according to the measure of his knowledge will be the illusoriness of his bonds.

But for the ordinary man to whom the knowledge will come as a spark, not as a flame, *the first step towards freedom will be to accept his limitations as self-made and proceed to enlarge them.*

True he cannot think as a genius thinks just yet, but he can think to the very best of his ability, and by and by he will become a genius; he can make power for the future, and he will.

True, he cannot get rid of his passional follies in a moment, *but he can fight against them, and when he has failed, he can fight on, certain that presently he must conquer.*

True, he has astral, and physical weaknesses and uglinesses, but *as his thoughts grow strong and pure and beautiful, and his work beneficent*, he is ensuring for himself more perfect forms in days to come.

48.

He is always himself, the free Soul, in the midst of his prison-house, and *he can hew down the walls he himself builded.*

He has no gaoler save himself; he can will his freedom; and, *in willing it, he will achieve.*

49.

A trouble meets him; he is bereaved of a friend; he commits a serious fault.

Be it so; he sinned as thinker in the past, he suffers as actor in the present.

But his friend is not lost; he will hold him fast by love, and in the future he will find him again; meanwhile there are others round him to whom he can give the services he would have showered on his beloved, and he will not again neglect the duties that are his and sow seed for similar loss in future lives. He has committed an open wrong and suffers its penalty, *but he thought it in the past, else could he not have wrought it now:*

He will patiently endure the penalty, he purchased by his thought, and *will so think today that his morrows shall be free from shame.*

Into what was darkness has come a ray of light, and the light is singing to him:

Ho! ye who suffer! know
Ye suffer from yourselves. None else compels.

The Law that seemed to be fetters has become wings, and by it he can rise to regions of which without it he could only dream.

MRS. BESANT'S
"Karma," pages 55 to 57.

50.

The real difficulty in the way of reformation lies in Kama, the desire-nature. *You do not want to do it; if you did you would do it.*

You will never become advanced if you do not endeavour to live up to the highest that is within your reach—if you allow the desire-nature to interfere with your progress.

The man who is in earnest—not spasmodically, but with steady persistence—can make what progress he chooses; while the man who is making believe will run round and round the mill-path for many a life to come.

MRS. BESANT'S

"Man and his Bodies,"

page 26.

51.

Sometime or other each of us must begin the work;

Sometime or other each will weary of the sensations of the lower nature, weary of being in subjection to the animal, weary of the tyranny of the senses.

Then the man will no longer consent to submit, he will decide that the bonds of his captivity shall be broken.

Why, indeed, should we prolong our bondage, when it is in our power to break it at any moment?

No hand can bind us save our own, and *no hand save our own can set us free.*

We have our right of choice; our freedom of will, and inasmuch as one day we shall all stand together in the higher world, *why should we not begin at once to break our bondage,* and to claim our divine birth-right?

52.

The beginning of the shattering of the fetters, of the winning of liberty, is *when a man determines that he will make the lower nature the servant of the higher,* that here on the plane of

the physical consciousness he will begin the building of the higher bodies, and will seek to realise those loftier possibilities which are his by right divine, and are only obscured by the animal in which he lives.

MRS. BESANT'S
"Man and his Bodies,"
pages 60 and 61.

53.

"It is our will
Which thus enchains us to permitted ill.
We might be otherwise; we might be all
We dream of, happy, high, majestical.
Where is the beauty, love, and truth we seek,
But in our minds? And if we were not weak,
Should we be less in deed than in desire?"
"Ay, *if* we were not weak,—and we aspire,
How vainly! to be strong," said Maddalo:
"You talk Utopia."

"It remains to know,"
I then rejoined; "and those who try may find
How strong the chains are which our spirit bind;
Brittle perchance as straw. We are assured
Much may be conquered, much may be endured,
Of what degrades and crushes us. We know
That we have power over ourselves to do
And suffer—*what*, we know not till we try,
But something nobler than to live and die."

SHELLEY.

54.

"I perceived that it was but a bell of glass which enclosed me within its airless space, and *that if I had strength enough to break it in pieces, I should become free.*"

WILHELM MEISTER, Bk. VI., page 87.

"Confessions of a Fair Saint."

55.

The first thing to realise is that the desire-nature is not ourself, but an instrument fashioned by the self for its own using; and next that it is a most valuable instrument, and is merely being badly used.

We are held back by wanting to unite ourselves with objects transitory, mean and narrow, *cannot we push ourselves forward by wanting to unite ourselves with the permanent, the noble and the wide?*

56.

What we need is to cultivate the emotions, and direct them in a way that will purify and ennoble the character. The basis of all emotions on the side of progress is love, and this is the power which we must cultivate.

57.

The aspirant should seek one more advanced than himself to whom he can direct his love and reverence. Happy the man who can find such a one when he seeks, for such finding gives him the most important condition for turning emotion from a retarding force into a lifting one, and for gaining the needed power to "want" that which he knows to be the best.

We cannot love without seeking to please, and we cannot reverence without taking joy in the approval of the one we revere.

Hence comes a constant stimulus to improve ourselves, to build up character, to purify the nature, to conquer all that in us is base, to strive after all that is worthy.

We find ourselves spontaneously "wanting" to reach a high ideal, and the great motive power is sent along the channels hewn out for it by the mind.

MRS. BESANT'S
"Some difficulties of the Inner Life,"
pages 12, 13 and 14.

58.

The companionship of those who love the Lord is stimulating to those who are beginning the Path.

MRS. BESANT'S
"The Three Paths," page 64.

59.

Man is a creature of reflection; what he reflects upon, that he becomes.

"Chhandogya Upanishad."

60.

As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.

PROVERBS. 23. 7.

61.

There's nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.

SHAKESPEARE.

62.

Knowing that he becomes that on which he meditates, *he deliberately and regularly meditates on a noble ideal,*

tor he understands why the great Christian Initiate Paul bade his disciples "think on" the things that are

true,
honest,
just,
pure,
lovely, and
of good report.

Daily he will meditate on his ideal,
Daily he will strive to live it;

and he will do this *persistently* and *calmly*, "without haste, without rest"; for he knows that he is building on a sure foundation, on the rock of the Eternal Law.

He appeals to the Law.
He takes refuge in the Law.
For such a man failure exists not.

There is no power in heaven or in earth that can bar his way.

MRS. BESANT'S
"Karma," pages 57 and 58.

63.

When a man accepts and partially understands the working of Karma, he can at once begin this building of character, setting each stone with deliberate care, knowing that he is building for eternity.

There is no longer hasty running up and pulling down, working on one plan to-day, on another to-morrow, on none at all the day after;

but *there is the drafting of a well-thought-out scheme of character*, as it were, and then the building according to the

scheme, for the Soul becomes an architect as well as a builder, and *wastes no time in abortive beginnings.*

MRS. BESANT'S
"Karma," pages 58 and 59.

64.

Looking for a moment over the dwellers in this Outer Court * * there is one characteristic which seems to be common to every one who is there. They differ very much in their mental and in their moral qualities; they differ very much in the progress that they have made; they differ, as is perceptible enough as we study them, in the qualifications which they have already obtained, in their fitness to pass onwards; but one thing they all seem to have in common, and that is EARNESTNESS.

They have a definite purpose before them.

Definitely and clearly they understand to what they are aspiring;

they are looking on the world with an earnest purpose under their life; and this, it seems to me, is perhaps the most salient characteristic, and the one which, as I said, is common to them all.

Whether you turn to the Scriptures that belong to one faith or another, inasmuch as they all come from the same great Brotherhood of Teachers, you will find the same characteristics are noted as marked in the aspirant, and all of them speak of this quality of EARNESTNESS as one of the most essential for the would-be disciple.

65.

This quality of EARNESTNESS underlies the whole purification of the nature,
the control of the thoughts,
the building of the character,

the transmutation of the lower qualities into the higher;
the whole of this work *pre-supposes the earnest nature which has recognised its object and is definitely seeking its goal.*

66.

The position of the Soul is not one given to it by arbitrary favour from any one;
it is not given by any kind of chance, nor does it depend upon any sort of accident;
it is a clear and definite condition, showing qualities definitely achieved, powers definitely gained, and these are marked out clearly, so that they are visible to any observer who has developed within himself the powers of sight beyond those concerned with mere physical matter.

MRS. BESANT'S
"In the Outer Court," pages 136 to 139.

67.

The student, when he grasps something of the meaning of the Law, begins to take himself in hand, and actively superintend his own evolution.

He scrutinizes his own character, and then proceeds to manipulate it.

He *deliberately* practises mental and moral qualities.
He enlarges capacities and strengthens weaknesses.
He supplies deficiencies, and removes excrescences.
Daily he meditates on his ideal.
Daily he strives to live it.

MRS. BESANT'S
"Karma," pages 57 and 58.

68.

All that is needed for the weeding out of any vice is:

(1) An accurate knowledge of the *vice* itself;
(2) A recognition—a keen feeling—that it is a *vice*, that it is foolish to entertain it, and that it is worthless; and lastly,

(3) The Will to "kill it out."

This *Will* will penetrate into the sub-conscious sphere where the *vice* dwells, and slowly, but surely erase it.

MRS. BESANT'S
"The Doctrine of the Heart,"
page 67.

69.

Christ is arisen,
The Lord hath ascended;
The dominion of death
And corruption is ended.
Your work of obedience
Haste to begin;
Break from the bondage
Of Satan and Sin.
In your lives His laws obey,
Let love your governed bosoms sway;
Blessings to the poor convey,
To God with humble spirit pray—
To man his benefits display—
Act thus, and he, your Master dear,
Though unseen, is ever near.

GOETHE'S "Faust."

70.

The only remedy for bad habits is counter-habits.

All the bad habits that have left their impression are to be controlled by good habits.

Go on doing good, thinking holy thoughts, continuously; that is the only way to suppress base impressions.

Never say any man is hopeless, because he only represents a character, a bundle of habits, and these can be checked by new and better ones. Character is repeated habits, and repeated habits alone can reform character.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S
"Raja Yoga," page 112.

71.

It does not matter what wishes the body may have, what habits it may have contracted in the past; the body is ours, our servant, to be employed as we desire, and the moment it takes the reins into his own hands, and claims to guide the man instead of being guided by the man, at that moment the whole purpose of life is subverted and any kind of progress is rendered utterly impossible.

72.

Here is the point at which any person who is in earnest must start.

73.

The very nature of the physical body makes it a thing which can be turned fairly easily into a servant or an instrument.

It has certain peculiarities which help us in training it and make it comparatively easy to guide and mould, and one of these peculiarities is that when once it has been accustomed to work along particular lines it will readily continue to follow those lines of its own accord, and will be quite as happy in doing so as it was previously in going along others.

If a bad habit has been acquired, the body will make considerable resistance to any change in that habit, *but if it be compelled to alter*, if the obstacle it places in the way be overcome, and *if it be forced to act as the man desires*, then after a short time the body will of its own accord repeat the new habit that the man has imposed on it, and will as contentedly pursue the new method as it pursued the old one to which the man found reason to object.

MRS. BESANT'S
"Man and his Bodies,"
pages 12 and 13.

74.

The body does not very much care in the long run what you give it, provided that you give it something that will keep it in health: *and it will accommodate itself in a short time to any form of pure and nutritious food that you choose to adopt.* Just because it is an automatic creature, it will soon stop asking for things that are steadily withheld from it, and if you disregard its demands for the coarser and ranker kinds of food, it will soon get into the habit of disliking them.

Habit can be used for help as well as for hindrance, and the body yields when it understands that you are the master and that you do not intend the purpose of your life to be interfered with by the mere instrument that is yours for use.

Despite all the past, make the change, and as you get rid of the particles that crave these impurities, you will feel your body altering its habits and revolting against the very smell of the things that it used to enjoy.

MRS. BESANT'S
"Man and his Bodies,"
page 75.

75.

I know of no way, save *resolute meditation* and *struggle*, by which a man can free himself from the vices of the body.

A daily ten minutes given to willing to be pure and self-controlled, steadily persisted in, *inevitably* brings about the desired change.

The use of some favourite text or shloka, instantly called up and repeated, when an evil thought arises, is efficacious.

And there must be the steady inner conviction, "It is not I who desire the evil, but only this body which I will train into obedience," and the sure belief in ultimate triumph.

Resist up to the last ounce of strength when temptation assails, and, if you fail, say to yourself: "Never mind, I am one step nearer victory." For resistance means accumulation of strength.

"Therefore fight."

MRS. BESANT: [Private Letter.]

76.

Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

HEBREWS. XII. 4.

77.

When a new study is commenced, or a change in favour of high morality is initiated, the early stages are found to be fraught with difficulties;

Sometimes even the effort is abandoned because the obstacles in the way of its success appear to be insurmountable.

At the beginning of any new mental undertaking the whole automatism of the mental body opposes it;

the materials habituated to vibrate in a particular way cannot accommodate themselves to the new impulses, and the early stage consists chiefly of sending out thrills of force which are frustrated, so far as setting up vibrations in the mental body are concerned, but which are the necessary preliminary to any such sympathetic vibrations, as they shake out of the body the old refractory materials and draw into it the sympathetic kinds.

During this process, the man is not conscious of any progress; he is only conscious of the frustration of his efforts, and of the dull resistance he encounters.

Presently, *if he persists*, as the newly attracted materials begin to function, he succeeds better in his attempts; and, at

last, when all the old materials are expelled and the new are working, he finds himself succeeding without an effort, and his object is accomplished.

The critical time is during the first stage, but if he trust in the law—as sure in its working as every other law in Nature—and *persistently repeats his efforts*, he must succeed; and a knowledge of this fact may cheer him when otherwise he would be sinking in despair.

In this way, then, the average man may work on, finding with joy that *as he steadily resists the promptings of the lower nature, he is conscious they are losing their power over him*, for he is expelling from his mental body all the materials that are capable of being thrown by them into sympathetic vibrations.

MRS. BESANT'S
"The Ancient Wisdom,"
pages 164 to 166.

78.

The "inheritance of the past" is slowly outworn and exhausted by present struggles, inevitably, surely; it is the Law. You may not see the out-wearing, but it *must* go on.

A millionaire does not feel wasting £10,000 a day, but let him go on and his million will at last disappear. So with you. You will become bankrupt—in evil inclinations.

You must conquer in the long run. Never mind repeated failures. Struggle *as long as you can* each time and you are nearer success.

Only, do not despair and do not give up the struggle.

"God will forgive thee all but thy despair."

MRS. BESANT: [Private Letter.]

79.

Set yourself to work to check some expression of the senses to which you have habitually yielded;

Cease taking some article of food that is very attractive;
Drop some form of drink that is very pleasurable and stimulating;
Leave off some form of physical pleasure to which you are particularly addicted.

Make yourself do a thing against the desire of the senses and choose a time when the sense is rampant, when it is longing for that particular gratification, eager to have it; when the thing is right in front of you, and you are just putting out your hand to grasp it. Stop and say: "I am stronger than you; you shall not gratify that desire."

Keep on doing it, and practise until the body is no obstacle at all; until you can starve all day long and be perfectly good-tempered, even to the last moment; until you can feel very tired and exhausted by physical labour and be as bright and even-tempered and sweet-natured to a troublesome child as if you were as fresh as possible.

That is what is meant by controlling the body.

Keep on practising until you can do it.

Keep on doing it until you realise that your body is only your servant, your slave, acting or not acting as you like, and feel the sense of shame when the body is able to make you do what the mind condemns; feel that to do that is to be less than man, less than really human.

Dogs snap when they are hungry or angry; human beings ought to be able to be self-controlled; and it is not much to ask that the man shall have control, which only means, after all, that his mind is master of his body.

MRS. BESANT'S
"Proofs of the Existence of the Soul,"
pages 28 to 31.

80.

Evil desires die away as good desires are *encouraged and fostered*—die away merely from want of nourishment.

The effort to reject all wrong desires is accompanied by the firm refusal of thought to allow them to pass on into actions.

Will begins to restrain action; even when Desire clamours for gratification, and this refusal to permit the action instigated by wrong desire gradually deprives of all attractive power the object which erstwhile aroused it. "The objects of sense * * * turn away from an abstemious dweller in the body."

The desires fade away, starved by lack of satisfaction. *Abstension from gratification is a potent means of purification.*

81.

There is another means of purification in which the repulsive force of Desire is utilised, as in the contemplation of the ideal the attractive force was evoked. It is useful in extreme cases, in which the lowest desires are tumultuous and insurgent, such desires as lead to the vices of Gluttony, Drunkenness, and Profligacy. Sometimes a man finds it impossible to get rid of evil desires and, despite all his efforts, his mind yields to their strong impulse, and evil imaginations riot in his brain. He may conquer by apparent yielding, carrying on the evil imaginations to their inevitable results. He pictures himself yielding to the temptations that assail him, and sinking more and more into the grip of the evil that masters him. He follows himself, as he falls deeper and deeper, becoming the helpless slave of his passions.

He traces with vivid imagination the stages of his descent, sees his body becoming coarser and coarser, then bloated and diseased. He contemplates the shattered nerves, the loathsome sores, the hideous decay and ruin of the once strong and healthy frame. He fixes his eyes on the dishonoured death, the

sad legacy of shameful memory left to relatives and friends. He faces in thought the other side of death, and sees the soil and distortion of his vices pictured in the suffering astral body, and the agony of the craving of desires that may no longer be fulfilled. Resolutely he forces his shrinking thoughts to dwell on this miserable panorama of the triumph of wrong desires, until there arises within him a strong repulsion against them, an intolerable fear and loathing of the result of present yielding.

Such a method of purification is like the surgeon's knife, cutting out a cancer which menaces the life, and, like all surgical operations, is to be avoided unless no other means of cure remain.

It is better to conquer wrong desire by the attractive force of an ideal, than by the repulsive force of a spectacle of ruin. But where attraction fails to conquer, repulsion may perhaps prevail.

There is also a danger in this latter method, since the coarser matter in the vehicle of desire is increased by this dwelling in thought on evil, and the struggle is thereby rendered longer than when it is possible to throw the life into good desires and high aspirations. Therefore, it is the worse method of the two, only to be accepted when the other is unattainable.

82.

By higher attraction,
By repulsion, or
By the slow teaching of suffering,
Desire must be purified.

MRS. BESANT'S
"A Study in Consciousness,"
pages 343 to 346.

83.

The habit of grasping and enjoying has been established by hundreds of lives, and is strong, while the habit of resisting a present pleasure in order to avoid a future pain is only in course of establishment, and is consequently very weak. Hence the conflicts between the Thinker and the Desire-Nature *end for a long time in a series of defeats.* The young Mind struggling with the mature Desire-body finds itself constantly vanquished. But every victory of the Desire-Nature being followed by a brief pleasure and a long pain, gives birth to a new force hostile to itself, that recruits the strength of its opponent. *Each defeat of the Thinker thus sows the seeds of his future victory,* and his strength daily grows while the strength of the Desire-Nature diminishes.

When this is clearly understood, we grieve no longer over our own falls and the falls of those we love; for we know that these falls are making sure the secure footing of the future, and that in the womb of pain is maturing the future conqueror.

84.

In the early days of the separated self all experiences were useful in his evolution and brought him the lessons needed for his growth. Gradually he learned that the yielding to Desires which, in the course of their gratification injured others, brought him pain out of proportion to the temporary pleasure derived from their satisfaction. He began to attach the word "wrong" to the desires the yielding to which brought a predominance of pain, and this the more quickly because the Teachers who guided his early growth placed on the objects which attracted such desires the ban of Their disapproval. When he had disobeyed Them and suffering followed, the impression made on the Thinker was the more powerful for the previous foretelling, and Conscience—the will to do the right and abstain from the wrong—was proportionately strengthened. In this connexion

we can readily see the value of admonition, reproof, and good counsel. All these are stored up in the mind, and are forces added to the accumulating memories which oppose the gratification of wrong desire.

85.

The doing of the wrong act merely means that the memory of past pain is not yet sufficiently strong to overcome the attraction of eagerly anticipated and immediate pleasure. The lesson needs to be repeated yet a few times more, to strengthen the memory of the past and, when that is done, victory is sure. The suffering is a necessary element in the growth of the soul, and has the promise of that growth in it.

86.

Everywhere around us, if we see aright, is growing good; nowhere is there hopeless evil.

87.

This struggle is expressed in the sad cry: "What I would, that I do not; what I would not; that I do." "When I would do good, evil is present with me."

The wrong that we do, when the wish is against the doing, is done by the habit of the past. The weak will is overpowered by the strong desire.

Now the Thinker in his conflict with the Desire-nature calls to his aid that very nature, and *strives to awaken in it a desire which shall be opposed to the desires against which he is waging war.* As the attraction of a weak magnet may be overpowered by that of a stronger one, so may one desire be strengthened for the overcoming of another, a right desire may be aroused to combat a wrong one. Hence the value of an Ideal.

88.

An Ideal is a fixed mental concept of an inspiring character, framed for the guidance of conduct, and *the formation of*

an Ideal is one of the most efficacious means of influencing desire.

The man who lives habitually in the presence of a great Ideal is armed against wrong desires by love of his ideal, by shame of being base in its presence, by the longing to resemble that which he adores, and also by the general set and trend of his mind along lines of noble thinking. Wrong desires become more and more incongruous. *They perish naturally, unable to breathe in that pure clear air.*

MRS. BESANT'S
"A Study in Consciousness,"
pages 335 to 341.

89.

As you think, you develop: as is your ideal, so gradually your lives will become. For there is this transforming power in thought, that *if your ideals are paltry and low, your lives will be paltry; if your ideals are material, your lives will be material.*

Take then this ideal of the Perfect Man and think of it, and your lives will be penetrated by its purity; you will become the nobler men and women, because it forms a subject of your thought, and the thought transforms you into its own likeness. *It is true that men become like that they worship, it is true that men become like what they think.*

MRS. BESANT'S
"The Masters as Facts and Ideals,"
page 34.

90.

Desire vanishes when you realise that all desires that are not directed to the permanent have in them the element of pain. When you find that time after time the joy is followed by weariness, you say: "Of what avail is it to enjoy for a

moment and then to be weary? Let me seek joy where joy is permanent, and where the more I have the deeper shall be enjoyment and peace and happiness." For there is this difference between material and spiritual bliss; the one cloys and disgusts, while the other increases with every new consumption, with every increase there is still more increase that lies beyond. This is the difference between the life of the divine and the material, between the life of the inner self and the life of these outer sheaths. Never will desire be dead till that lesson is learned, and the self turns inwards to Its own centre, which is infinite, in which bliss can never be exhausted nor lost.

MRS. BESANT'S
"The Self and Its Sheaths,"
pages 82 and 83.

91.

This is the test of the Inner Life.

You cannot touch the higher until you have lost grasp of the lower. You cannot feel the higher, until the touch of the lower is becoming that of a corpse. * *

In giving up the lower, the higher is secured; and by throwing up the life we know, the life eternal gains us as its own.

MRS. BESANT'S
"The Laws of the Higher Life,"
page 59.

92.

The life given to the lower is lost to the higher; yea, it is finally lost also to the lower, and so all is lost, for evil is ultimately nothingness.

But the life given to the higher is preserved, and is not lost to anything, for while it sacrifices much that the world holds precious, it does not sacrifice anything that is precious in reality. The untrue and the worthless must perish, and he who

consecrates himself to the good and true is content that they should perish, and so at last he stands where sacrifice ends, and all is gain—such a one survives in the struggle of life without, and he conquers in the battle of Truth within.

JAMES ALLEN'S
"The Life Triumphant,"
pages 34 and 35.

93.

The means to lead a more spiritual life are:

1. *Meditation*, so as to strengthen thought-power and bring the mind under control:
2. *Worship*, so that devotion may be kindled:
3. The doing of work as a duty, trying gradually to think less of the result gained and more of doing one's best in the work:
4. *Sacrifice:* offering all one's work to the object of Devotion:
5. The resolute endeavour to purify thought, desire, and action.

All this, however imperfectly done at first, is the preparation for the approach to the "Outer Court."

MRS. BESANT: [Private Letter.]

94.

Sacrifice:

When a man resolves to begin the practice of Sacrifice, *he will train himself to open every day with an act of sacrifice*, the offering himself, ere the day's work begins, to Him to whom he gives his life: his first waking thought will be this dedication of all his power to his Lord.

Then each thought, each word, each action in daily life, will be done as a sacrifice—not for its fruit, not even as duty, but as the way in which at the moment, his Lord can be served.

Every human life offers countless opportunities for this practice of the law of sacrifice, and *every human life becomes a power as these opportunities are seized and utilised. In no other way can progress be made with equal rapidity*, and the manifestation of all the powers latent in the Monad be brought about so quickly, as by the understanding and the practice of the law of sacrifice.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"The Ancient Wisdom,"
pages 381 and 382.

95.

You and I, my brothers, to-day, if we will, may begin to make the Great Renunciation, and if we do not begin it in the daily life, in our hourly dealings with our fellows, be assured that we should not be able to make it when we stand on the mountain crest.

The habit of daily sacrifice, the habit of thinking, the habit of always giving and not taking, only thus shall we learn to make what the outer world calls the Great Renunciation.

* * * * *

The life of the disciple is one long series of petty renunciations, one long series of daily sacrifices, one continual dying in time in order that the higher may eternally live.

* * * * *

The life of the disciple is lived in the home,
is lived in the town,
is lived in the office,
is lived in the market-place,
yea, amid the common lives of men.

The true life of sacrifice is that which utterly forgets itself, in which renunciation becomes so common that there is no effort, that it becomes a thing of course.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"The Laws of the Higher Life,"
pages 69 to 71.

96.

We must begin it to-day.

We must begin it in our lives,

in duty to wife, to child, to nation, to humanity.

Never is a Great One made save where the smaller duties are accomplished, and that which in the end is a Mahâtmâ, at the beginning was a self-sacrificing Grihasta in the home.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"The Self and Its Sheaths,"
page 86.

97.

Meditation.

All people who are training their minds should maintain an attitude of steady watchfulness with regard to the thoughts that "come into the mind," and *should exercise towards them a constant selection.*

The refusal to harbour evil thoughts, their prompt ejection if they effect an entry, the immediate replacement of an evil thought by a good one of the opposite character—this practice will so tune the mind that after a time it will act automatically.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"Thought Power," page 97.

98.

You must be able to kill thoughts. The moment a thought comes, if it is not wanted, it must fall away. First, you kill it by deliberate action; that is, *you reject it when it comes. But the realising of its presence is lack of concentration.* The very fact that you see it there shows that it is able to make an impression upon you. Therefore you must deliberately kill it.

Therefore, *when the thought comes to you, you must throw it back.*

This will be a long process; but *if you keep doing it month after month, nay, year after year, at last it will become automatic*, and you will have made in the mind such a repellant power that you may set that power going by drawing yourself into the centre, and the thought coming from the outside striking against it will get self-thrown back.

It is like a wheel revolving very rapidly. If it is slowly moving, any moving body that may come against it may check its revolution. If it is moving very rapidly, any moving body that comes against it will get itself flung off. And in proportion to the rapidity of the revolution will be the force of repulsion with which the body is thrown back. That becomes automatic, and just as you get beyond the stimulus of the senses, you get beyond the reach of the mind, that is, the mind becomes self-centred and the circumference throws off automatically every thing which desires to enter. That is the position which you have now secured. Then again there is the worldly advantage, for the highly concentrated mind does not wear itself out; it does not allow to enter all the thoughts which it does not require. It does not consider them. It does not allow energy to be wasted on them, and so fritter away its powers. It is kept empty as to thought when work is not required, instead of being a sort of ever-busy machine, always going, and so wearing itself out.

Instead of this, it is a machine under absolute control, which works or does not work exactly as the self desires that it shall or shall not.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"Yoga" in "The Building of the Kosmos,"
Indian Edition, pages 65 and 66.

99.

The mind is like a magnet, attracting and repelling, and the nature of its attractions and repulsions can be determined by ourselves.

If we watch the thoughts which come into our minds, *we will find that they are of the same kind as those we habitually encourage.*

The mind attracts the thoughts which are congruous with its normal activities.

If we then, for a time, deliberately practise selection, the mind will soon do this selection for itself, on the lines laid down for it, and so evil thoughts will not penetrate into the mind, while the good will ever find an open door.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"Thought Power,"
page 98.

100.

Presently you will find that as you welcome into your mind all thoughts that are good and useful, and refuse to entertain thoughts that are evil, this result will appear:

That more and more good thoughts will flow into your mind from without, and fewer and fewer evil thoughts will flow into it.

The effect of making your mind full of good and useful thoughts will be that it will act as a magnet for all the similar thoughts that are around you; as you refuse to give any sort of harbourage to evil thoughts, those that approach you will be thrown back by the automatic action of the mind itself.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"Man and his Bodies,"
pages 71 and 72.

101.

Thought-forms are connected with their progenitor by what—for want of a better phrase—we must call a magnetic tie;—they re-act upon him, producing an impression which leads to their reproduction.

Where a thought-form is re-inforced by repetition, a very definite habit of thought may be set up, a mould may be formed into which thought may readily flow—helpful, if it be of a very lofty character, as a noble ideal, but for the most part cramping and a hindrance to mental growth.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"Karma," page 17.

When an evil thought enters the mind it is better not to fight with it directly but to utilise the fact that the mind can only think of one thing at a time; let the mind be at once turned to a good thought, and the evil one will be necessarily expelled.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"Thought Power,"
page 99.

102.

Many a man wastes years in combating impure thoughts when quiet occupation of the mind with pure ones would leave no room for his assailants; further, as the mind draws to itself matter which does not respond to the evil, he is gradually becoming positive, unreceptive, to that kind of thought.

Page 99.

103.

If a man's thoughts are pure and noble, he will attract around him hosts of beneficent entities, and may some times wonder whence came to him the power for achievement that seems—and truly seems—to be much beyond his own.

Similarly, a man of foul and base thoughts attracts to himself hosts of maleficent entities, and by this added energy for evil commits crimes that astonish him in the retrospect. "Some devil must have tempted me," he will cry; and truly

these demoniac forces, *called to him by his own evil*, add strength to it from without.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"Karma," page 19.

104.

This is the secret of right receptivity; the mind responds according to its constitution;
it answers to all that is of like nature with itself;
we make it positive towards evil, negative towards good, by habitual good thinking, thus building into its very fabric materials that are receptive of good, unreceptive of evil.

We must think of that which we desire to receive, and refuse to think of that which we desire not to receive. Such a mind, in the thought-ocean which surrounds it, draws to itself the good thoughts, repels the evil, and thus ever grows purer and stronger amid the very same thought conditions which render another fouler and weaker.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"Thought Power,"
page 99.

105.

If an unkind thought about another person enter the mind, it should at once be replaced by a thought of some virtue he possesses, of some good action he has done.

If the mind be harassed by anxiety, turn it to the thought of the purpose that runs through life, the Good Law which "mightily and sweetly ordereth all things."

If a particular kind of undesirable thought persistently obtrude itself, then it is wise to provide a special weapon; some verse or phrase that embodies the opposite idea should be chosen, and wherever the objectionable thought presents itself,

this phrase should be repeated and dwelt upon. In a week or two the thought will cease to trouble.

Page 100.

106.

It is a good plan constantly to furnish the mind with some high thought, some word of cheer, some inspiration to noble living;

Ere we go forth into life's turmoil day by day, we should give the mind this shield of good thought.

A few words are enough, taken from some Scripture of the race, and this fixed on the mind by a few recitations in the early morning, will recur to the mind again and again during the day, and will be found repeating itself in the mind, whenever the mind is disengaged.

Page 100.

107.

Resolute endeavour to purify thought, desire, and action.

The way to begin to tread the Path that leads to the Place of Peace is—

To endeavour to identify our consciousness with the True Self, to see as it sees, to judge as it judges.

The means are:

1. Disengagement from the objects of the senses.
2. Carelessness as to results, and
3. Meditation, ever renewed, on the *True Self.*

The *first* of them is to be gained only by a constant and wise self-discipline.

We can cultivate indifference to small discomforts, to pleasures of the table, to physical enjoyments, bearing with good humoured tolerance outward things as they come, neither shunning nor courting small pleasures or pains.

In learning this moderation is the key note.

"The meditation which destroyeth pain is produced in him who is moderate in eating and in recreation, of moderate exertion in his actions, and regulated in sleeping and waking."

The body is not to be shattered: it is to be trained.

The *second* of these methods is "carelessness as to results," which means that when an action has been done with our best judgment and strength, and with pure intent, then we should let it go, metaphorically, and feel no anxiety about its results. The action done is beyond recall and we gain nothing by worry and anxiety. When its results appear, we note them for instruction, but we neither rejoice nor mourn over them.

Remorse or jubilation takes away our attention from and weakens us in the performance of our present duty, and there is no time for either.

The value of thus separating ourselves from results lies in the calmness of mind thus obtained, and the concentration brought to bear on each action.

The *third* method, *meditation*, is the most efficacious, and the most difficult.

It consists of a constant endeavour to realise one's identity with one's True Self, and to become self-conscious here as it were.

"To whatsoever object the inconstant mind goeth out, he should subdue it, bring it back, and place it upon the spirit."

The effort needs to be *continually renewed, patiently persisted in.*

It may be aided by fixing on definite hours, at which for a few moments, we may withdraw ourselves like the turtle into its shell, and remember that we are not transitory but eternal, and that passing incidents can affect us not at all.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"The Place of Peace."

108.

How shall the ordinary man or woman begin (to tread the Path which leads to the Place of Peace)?

The *first steps*, the early steps, are those which every religion has taught.

Carefulness and unselfishness in life, Discharge of duty in whatever place in life man or woman may happen to be.

"Follow the wheel of life; follow the wheel of duty to race and kin;" that is a preliminary.

For those who would gain knowledge of the soul must begin in this way, which has ever been taught,

By the leaving off of evil ways, and
By the following of good;
By purity of life,
By service to man,
By the unselfish effort, continually repeated, to be useful in whatever place one may be in by the law of nature.
The endeavour to discharge to the fullest every obligation,
The endeavour to live a life which shall leave the world better than it was found,
The endeavour to live nobly, unselfishly, and purely,—

these are the conditions laid down for those who would find the Path.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"The Masters as Facts and Ideals,"
pages 25 and 26.

109.

Purification.

First men do action for self-gratification; there only progress in experience is gained;
then they learn to do it as duty, and so they begin to practise Yoga in their daily life;

lastly, they do it as a joyful sacrifice for which they ask nothing back, but give every power they possess for the accomplishment of the work. And in this way union is accomplished.

We understand what is meant by *Purification* when we notice these stages of self-gratification, of doing duty as duty, of giving every thing as a free-will sacrifice.

These are the stages on the path of purification.

But how shall such purification be made as shall lead to the higher steps, to the beginning of the discipleship for which all created activity is to be the preparation?

Every part of man must be purified, body as well as mind.

On the purification of the body I have not time to dwell, but I may remind you that according to the teaching of the *Bhagavat Gîtâ* it is by way of moderation that this purification is accomplished and not by self-torturing asceticism, torturing the body and Him that dwells within it, as Shrî Krishna says.

Yoga is accomplished by temperate self-control, by deliberate training of the lower nature, by quietly choosing the pure path in food, by care and moderation in all physical activities, thus gradually training and regulating and moderating until the whole body comes under the control of the Will and of the Self.

110.

The Sexual Passions.

Therefore the household life was ordained; for men were not fit for the hard road of celibacy, save here and there a few.

Brahmacharya was not for all.

By household life men were taught to control and moderate their sexual passions, not by crushing them out—which is for the mass of men impossible; and if attempted with unwise energy often results in a reaction that throws the unwise person into the worst profligacy of life—not by a single effort which tries to kill and to uproot in a moment, but *by gradual training*

in moderation, and by practising the self-denial of the home, where the lower nature should be slowly trained to temperance and be accustomed to be controlled by the higher, trained out of its over-activity and made utterly subordinate to the one. There is where this Karma-Yoga comes in.

The householder has gradually to learn self-control, moderation, making the lower nature yield to the higher, training it day by day until it is absolutely subject to the will. In that way he purifies the body, and becomes fitted for the higher paths of Yoga.

111.

Then again he must purify the passions of the lower nature all through.

112.

Anger.

Take the passion of anger, and see how it may be worked upon in Karma-Yoga, in order that it may be transmuted in quality.

Anger is an energy, an energy that goes out of man to light his way. You see it in an undeveloped and untrained man as passion, showing itself in many brutal forms, beating down opposition, caring not what methods are used if he strikes out of his way all that which opposes the gratification of his will. And in that form it is an undisciplined and destructive energy of nature which he who would do Karma-Yoga must most certainly subdue. How shall he subdue and train the passion of Anger?

He gets rid of the personal element to begin with. When a personal injury is done to him he trains himself to cease to resent it.

How shall this passion be purified?

You may remember that amongst the ten-fold system of duty which Manu laid down, forgiveness of injuries is one of the duties.

You may remember that when the Buddha was teaching, He taught: "Hatred ceases not by hatred at any time, hatred ceases by love."

You may remember that the Christian Teacher followed the same line of thought and He said: "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

That is Karma-Yoga.

Forgive the injury; give love for hatred; overcome evil with good.

In that way you will eliminate the personal element; you will no longer feel angry because you are wronged; you will have purified away the personal element, and anger in you will no longer be of this lower kind.

* * * * *

* * * * *

But still a form of anger may remain of a higher kind, * * * Impersonal anger—far nobler than the other and a necessary stage in human evolution; far nobler and better to be angry with a wrong-doer than pass by in stolid indifference, because you have no sympathy with the suffering that is inflicted. That higher impersonal anger is nobler than indifference, but it is not the highest. It also in turn has to be changed into the quality of doing justice to the strong and the weak alike: which compassionates the wrong-doer as well as the wronged; which sees that he injures himself even more than the person whom he hates; which is sorry for him as well as for the person who suffers under him; which embraces all, wrong-doer and sufferer, in one embrace of love and justice. The man who has thus purified the passion of anger stops the wrong because it is his duty to stop it, and is gentle to the wrong-doer, because he also must be helped and trained; thus what was anger striking back against a personal wrong becomes justice which

stops all wrong and makes the strong and the weak equally safe and equally protected.

113.

Love.

Take again *Love.*

You may have that in the lower brutal form—the animal passion between the sexes of the very lowest and the poorest kind, which cares nothing for the character of the one for whom the attachment is felt, which cares nothing for the beauty of the mental and of the moral nature; it cares only for the physical beauty, the physical attraction, and the physical pleasure. There is passion in its lowest form. Self is sought and only self.

That is purified by the man who follows Karma-Yoga into love which sacrifices itself for the one who is loved, who performs family duties, who takes care of wife and of child, and does his very best for them at the sacrifice of his own inclinations, of his own leisure, and his own gratification, who works in order that the family may be better supported, who works in order that the family wants may be supplied; in him love no longer seeks only its own pleasure but seeks to help those who are beloved and to take on itself the evil that threatens them in order that they may be sheltered and spared and guarded; by following Karma-Yoga the man purifies his love from the selfish elements, and that which was an animal passion for the other sex becomes the love of the husband, of the father, of the elder brother, of the relative, who fulfils his duty, working for the sake of the loved in order that their lives may be fairer and happier.

114.

And then there comes the last stage, when the love that is purified from self goes out to all.

Not only in the narrow circle of the home does it work, but it sees in every one whom it meets a person who is to be

helped, sees a brother to be fed in every starving man, sees a sister to be protected in every woman who is left forlorn. Finding any one who is lonely, a man thus purified becomes father and brother and helper to that one, not because he loves personally but because he loves ideally, and because he seeks to give for love's sake and not even for the gratification of being loved in return. *The highest love, the love that grows out of Karma Yoga, asks nothing back in return for what it gives; it seeks no gratitude; it asks for no recognition; it is willing to work unknown; nay, it is more glad to work unknown and unrecognised than to work in a way that brings recognition and that brings praise.*

And the ultimate purification of love is where that love becomes absolutely divine, where it gives because it is its nature to spread happiness, and where it asks nothing for itself but seeks only that others should be glad.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"The Path of Discipleship,"
pages 24 to 29.

115.

Give, give, give, continually, for giving is of the very nature of love. Love asks for nothing save the right to give; love asks for nothing save the right to spend; love asks for no return, no gratitude. It asks for no enjoyment for itself. It asks only to be allowed to love, to spread itself out in every direction. and make all happy in the embrace of the lover. * * * Where there is no free giving there is no place for God.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"The Three Paths,"
page 62.

116.

Love must be made still purer when the candidate has come within the Outer Court; he must carry in with him love,

but it is love that must have begun to lose its exclusiveness; it is love that must keep its fire ever burning more warmly, but the warmth must be spread out further and further and be purified from every thing of lower nature; and that means that the love shall be a love that in going out to others shall always seek to serve them rather than to serve itself, shall always seek how much it may give to them rather than how much it may take from them, and so a love that will be becoming gradually Divine in its essence, going out according to the measure of the need rather than according to the richness of the return.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"In the Outer Court," page 32.

117.

Greed, covetousness.

And so again with *greed, covetousness.* Men seek to gain in order that they may enjoy; they desire gain in order that they may have power; they strive to gain in order that they may be lifted up. They purify that first form of greed; and they begin to desire to gain that the family may be better off, that the family may be in a better position, that the family may be beyond suffering, and want and starvation; thus they grow less selfish than before.

Then they go further. They desire power in order that they may use it for good, that they may spread it to do good over a wider area than the family, that they may serve in a wider field than the home; and at last, as in the case of love, they learn to give it without any return. They learn to desire knowledge and power, not that they may hold it, but that they may give it, not that they may enjoy it, but only in order that it may be spread. And in this way selfishness is burned up.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"The Path of Discipleship,"
pages 29 and 30.

118.

Purity.

How shall a man build himself into Purity?

By, in his morning meditation, taking purity as part of the subject on which he thinks, realising what it means.

No impurity of thought must ever touch him;
no impurity of action must ever stain him:
he must be pure in the three-fold thread of action, word thought. * * *In the morning he thinks of purity as a thing that is desirable, that he must accomplish;* and when he goes out into the world he carries the memory of his meditation with him.

He watches his actions;
he allows no impure action to stain his body;
he commits no impure action all through the day, for *he steadily watches every action that no touch of impurity may soil it.*

He watches his words. He speaks no word that is impure;
he makes no reference in his talk to an unclean subject;
he never permits his tongue to be soiled by making an unclean suggestion. Every word of his is pure, *so that he would dare to speak it in the presence of the Master,* whose eye sees every lightest stain of impurity which the ordinary mortal eye would miss.

He will watch every word that it may be the purest that he can utter, and he can never foul himself or others by a single word or phrase coarse with impure suggestion.

His thought will be pure.

He will never allow an unclean thought to come into his mind or, *if it comes into his mind, it will at once be cast out; the moment the thought comes he will cast it out;* and as he knows that it could not come into his mind unless there was in his mind something to attract it, he purifies his own mind, so that no unclean thought of any one else may be able to gain

entrance. Thus he watches on this one point through the whole of his day.

119.

Truth.

And then again he will take truth in his morning meditation; he will think of truth, its value in the world, its value in society, its value in his own character, and when he goes out into the world of men he will never commit an action that will give a false impression; he will never speak a word that conveys a false idea.

Not only will he not lie, but he will not even be inaccurate, because that is also speaking a falsehood. To be inaccurate in recounting what you have seen is to speak untruth. All exaggeration and painting up of a story, every thing that is not perfectly consistent with fact, so far as he knows it, everything which has any shade of untruthfulness, may not be used by him who would become a disciple.

And so in thought again he must be true. Every thought must be as true as he can make it, with no shadow of falsehood to pollute his mind.

120.

Compassion.

So with compassion. He will meditate on compassion in the morning, and during the day he will seek to practise it;
he will show all kindness to people around him;
he will do all service to family and friends and neighbours.
Wherever he sees want he will try to relieve it;
Wherever he sees sorrow he will try to comfort it;
Wherever he sees misery he will strive to lighten it:
He will live compassion as well as think it, and so make it part of his character.

121.

Fortitude.—So with Fortitude.

He will think of the nobility of the strong man, the man whom no outer circumstances can depress or elate, the man who is not joyful over success nor miserable under failure, who is not at the mercy of circumstances, sad to-day because things are troublesome and joyful to-morrow because things are easy. He will try to be himself, always balanced and strong; as he goes out into the world he will practise; if trouble comes he will think of the Eternal where no trouble is; if loss of money comes, he will think of the wealth of wisdom that cannot be taken away from him; if a friend be snatched by death, he will consider that no living soul can die, and that the body that dies is only the garment which is thrown aside when it is out-worn, and another taken, and that his friend shall be found again.

122.

Self-restraint: Peaceableness: Fearlessness.

And so with all the other virtues of *Self-restraint*, of *peaceableness*, of *fearlessness*, all these things he will think of and practise.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"The Path of Discipleship,"
pages 57 to 59.

123.

The qualities which build up the Divine character.

You might take, for instance, such a tracing as is given in the 16th Discourse in the *Bhagavat Gita* by Shri Krishna to Arjuna, where he is telling Arjuna what should be the qualities which build up the divine character. * * And if you take it as it is sketched in the 16th Discourse, you will find a list of qualities, everyone of which might serve as a part of your constant thought and endeavour, remembering that *the character is*

built first by the contemplation of the virtue, and then by the working out of that virtue which has become part of the thought into the speech and the action in daily life.

And the list runs—

"Fearlessness,
Purity of heart,
Steadfastness in the Yoga of Wisdom (constant attention to the Discipline of his understanding, the will always to strive for Wisdom.)
Almsgiving,
Self-Restraint and Sacrifice, and
Study of the Shastras,
Austerity (Penance), and
Straightforwardness,
Harmlessness,
Truth,
Absence of Wrath,
Renunciation,
Peacefulness,
Absence of Calumny,
Compassion to living beings,
Uncovetousness,
Mildness,
Modesty,
Absence of Fickleness,
Boldness,
Forgiveness,
Fortitude,
Uprightness,
Amity,
Absence of Pride—these become his who is born with the divine qualities."

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"In the Outer Court,"
pages 88 and 89.

124.

Fearlessness, singleness of Soul, the will
Always to strive for wisdom; opened hand
And governed appetites; and piety,
And love of lonely study; humbleness,
Uprightness, heed to injure nought that lives,
Truthfulness, slowness to wrath, a mind
That lightly letteth go what others prize;
And equanimity, and charity,
Which spieth no man's faults; and tenderness
Towards all that suffer; a contented heart,
Flattered by no desires; a bearing mild,
Modest and grave, with manhood nobly mixed,
With patience, fortitude and purity;
An unrevengeful spirit, never given
To rate itself too high,—such be the signs,
O Indian Prince! of him whose feet are set
On that fair path which leads to heavenly birth.

EDWIN ARNOLD'S,
"Bhagavat Gita."

125.

Nothing is to be hated, everything is to be brought within the circle of Love, no matter how outwardly repulsive, no matter how outwardly antagonistic, no matter how outwardly repugnant; the heart of all is Life and Love, and therefore this aspirant who is learning his lessons can shut nothing out from his circle of compassion; everything is taken within it according to its own power of feeling, and *he is the friend of every living thing, the lover of all that lives and feels.*

126.

And as he is thus building these stones into his character he becomes fearless; *fearless, because hating nothing there is nothing that has power to harm.*

Injury from without is but the reaction of aggression from within; *because we are the enemies of others, they in their turn are our enemies*, and because we go out to the world as injurers, therefore living things injure us in turn. We, who ought to be the lovers of all living things, go out as destroyers, as tyrants, as haters, grasping the world for tyranny and not for education, as though man's work here were not to educate his younger brethren, and lead them upwards by all tenderness and compassion; we go out and we tyrannise over others, whether they be human or brute, so long as they are weaker than ourselves; and by their weakness we too often measure our tyranny, and by their helplessness too often the burden that we lay upon them. And then we wonder that living things fly from us—that as we go into the world we are met with dread from the weak, and with hatred from the strong; and we know not in our blindness that *all the hatred from the outer world is the reflection of the evil that is in ourselves*, and that to the heart of love there is nothing that is hateful, and therefore nothing that can injure.

MRS. A BESANT'S
"In the Outer Court,"
page 94.

127.

And then comes the absence of desire, *the gradual getting rid of all those desires that tie us to the lower world, the gradual working out of all those longings which in the lives that lie behind us we found had no satisfaction for the Soul, the gradual casting aside of all the fetters that tie us down to earth; the gradual elimination of the personal desire and the self-identification with the whole.*

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"In the Outer Court,"
page 96.

128.

"All pain and suffering on earth arise from that which is dear to man. He, therefore, to whom nothing is dear is free from pain and suffering; and *he who strives to attain to that state in which there is no pain and suffering, allows nothing in the world to be dear to him.*"

BUDDHA.

129.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world, *the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.*

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doth the will of God abideth for ever.

I. JOHN, II. 15 to 17.

130.

The first step is a step of forcible abstension from the gratification of desire.

"As a tortoise draws in on all sides its limbs, he withdraws his senses from the objects of sense."

The man, *realising the futility of constant enjoyment followed by suffering; realising that all contact-born delights are verily wombs of pain;*
realising that pleasure, which at first is nectar, later becomes poison; recognising all this, what shall he do?

The first step is to forcibly hold himself back by the mind from the objects of desire; this he can do, for "greater than the senses is the mind." And so it is said that from the abstemious dweller in the body, the objects of the senses gradually turn

away. And this for a simple reason. *Because in every object of desire is hidden a fragment of the Self, which allures another fragment, awakening therein desire for union; but when that fragment of the Self begins to desire union with the Self and not with the outer husk, and deliberately rejects the husk, the Self within the object withdraws that object, and neutralises its alluring influence:* thus the rejection of the object by the man is answered by the withdrawal of the alluring object by the Lord, who lives within the objects of the senses. Thus may the objects refused be truly said to "turn away from an abstemious dweller in the body."

131.

Then the second step is taken. The man is only holding himself back by force.

His desires are longing again to plunge into sense-delights, for "relish" remains, but with iron hands he holds them back; desire is changed into Will, and instead of being drawn from outside, it is being guided from inside.

Out of that forcible abstension, out of that turning away from the objects of desire, *there comes to the abstemious dweller in the body, in the midst of these frustrated longings, a vision of the Supreme, of the Supreme delight beyond the senses.*

When the vision of the Supreme dawns upon the abstemious dweller in the body, then relish itself turns away; desire dies, slain by the *bhakti*, which is the perfection of that temperament which sought all desirable objects. *With the vision of the Supreme, who becomes the object of desire, the object of devotion, all lower objects lose their attracting power, and have no longer force of allurement to draw the man away: a mightier attraction has been felt, that of the Self unveiled,* whereas before the Self was veiled within the husk of the desirable object; *that overcoming desire takes away all taste for the fleeting objects of the moment,* and then comes the regular practice of

the Yoga of Renunciation. * * * Giving up desire is Renunciation, is the Yoga of Renunciation, the Bhakti Marga, and *it becomes an easy path when once the Supreme is seen.*

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"Hints on the Study of the Bhagavad Gita,"
pages 87 to 89.

132.

Every one of us knows it to be true that the Mind is difficult to bend, hard to restrain, and the more we try to restrain it, the more vigorous appears the mind in its restless plunging; yet the Lord of Yoga declares that it is possible to attain equanimity, and he gives two words which are to guide the aspirant:

Constant Practice and Dispassion.

You may remember a previous Shloka in which He said: 'As often as the wavering and unsteady mind goeth forth, so often, reining it in, let him bring it under the control of the Self." That is the "constant practice"; and, without that, no possibility of equilibrium, and naturally so, because for thousands upon thousands and thousands of years the mind has been running out in every direction, and that running out of the mind is the mark of its development up to a certain stage. When the mind is in a low stage of development, it rests indifferent, sleeping within the man, save when driven outwards by some potent physical craving. No progress is possible except by the going out of the mind, and this restless activity of the mind is necessary for evolution, necessary to carry the man on to a stage when he can begin to work for equanimity.

Constant practice then, the reining of it in and placing it with the Self, over and over again with untiring patience, with endless perseverance, that is the first step. * * *

Just because it is according to the Law, it is certain. If it were not according to the law, then there would be no certainty

of success, for you might constantly rein it in without result; but as it is the law that practice makes habit, and habit builds character, you may be sure that constant practice will gradually lead to the habit of equanimity, and this will become the fixed stability of character.

Pages 64 to 66.

133.

Now if this certainty of the Existence of the Self in its divine nature is to be reached, *there is but one method: Meditation and noble living.*

Perfect righteousness, perfect dispassion, perfect knowledge, perfect self-control.

These are the ways by which the proof of the Deity, which is the consciousness of the Divinity of the Self within us, is to be found.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"The Wisdom of the Upanishats,"
page 8.

134.

"All the proofs that can be given [of the existence of God] amount to a high degree of probability rather than to a certainty. Complete proof lies only in the realisation of the Divine Self in us, our true Self, that recognises the Divine Self without us by identity of nature.

As a man grows purer, wiser, more loving, he begins to know God, and no more needs proof of His existence than he needs proofs of the light by which he sees.

"C. Hindu College Magazine,"
1902, page 125.

135.

God is Existence: we live because He lives. In endless forms, through some of which more of Him shines than through others. We see Him, as we see the Self in all beings, all beings in the Self.

"C. H. C. Magazine,"
1907, page 273.

136.

"Man is thought-made. *As he thinks in this world, so he becomes in the next world.* Therefore let him think on Brahman."

Right thought is the way to the breaking of the bonds which are woven by wrong thought.

So long as we think of ourselves as the body, we shall be bound in the body; so long as we think ourselves as the mind, we shall be bound in the mind; *so long as we think ourselves as the lower, we shall remain in the lower.* So also when we think ourselves as the Self we shall become the Self.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"The Wisdom of the Upanishats,"
page 89.

137.

The man is in the body of light, not in the body of the shadow. When the man has risen into the radiant body, the Augoeides, then he goes along the path of light.

The shadow to the shadow and the light to the light. *As long as you think the shadow to be yourself, so long you must follow the path of the shadow, of the smoke, of the cloud, of any object by which you may describe the material side of things;* but when you realise yourself as the Self, not as matter, not as

form, then you belong to the light side of the world, the spirit side, to all that is brilliant, and in a body of light you go to the source of light, and verily you return not again.

Page 95.

138.

The stages are very, very clear; clear they are, but easy they are not.

Live the life of unity, realise that you are the Self, and the Self is one.

"Whoever sees variety in Him, proceeds from death to death."

"He proceeds from death to death who beholdeth difference."

"*As a mirror, Earth-soiled, made clean, shines as though made of light, so the dweller in the body, having seen the true nature of the Self, becomes one, pain ceases.*"

Pages 95 and 96.

139.

In order that we may have the courage to go through the long struggle of births and deaths, the Upanishat declares, "The Self is to be known."

For a man cannot work for that which he feels to be entirely out of his reach, and he must first gain the conviction that the finding of the Self is possible, before he will enter the path at the end of which he will win his freedom.

First of all, then, you need the inner conviction of the Self, and of his finding.

140.

The further steps are given on the whole most definitely and clearly in the *Kathopanishat—No man may find the Self who has not "ceased from evil ways."* That is the second step.

So long as a man follows an evil way and loves it, so long the Self is hidden from him by a cloud that he may not pierce. He may be weak, faulty, may still make many an error, and stumble, but he must see them as stumbles and errors, before he can be said to have ceased from evil ways; he must see the wrong as wrong, he must recognise it, must repudiate it, must say: "It it not I."

And when he has so repudiated evil, he must subdue his senses, he must concentrate his intellect; for the unsubdued may not obtain the Self, nay, not even by knowledge—a warning to any one who thinks that intellectual appreciation without purity and self-control, can mean the realisation of the Self.

A man who has not ceased from evil does not attain the Self, even by knowledge.

"This they call Yoga, the firm subduing of the senses."

141.

So also the *Kenopanishat* says that the means of obtaining the Self are "*restraint, subdual, work.*"

Restraint of the desires;
Subdual of the mind;
Work for the purification of the body;

when a man is thus striving then he may understand the steps in his own nature by which he rises.

142.

The *Taittiriyopanishat* gives them:

"Body, life, mind, knowledge, bliss."

These words describe the passing through the different stages of the shadow on the way to the sunlight.

The body; that must be purified and the man must cease to identify himself with his body, looking at the body, he must be able to say by life as well as lips, "This is not I."

The lower life, the Prana, the desire-nature; he identifies himself with that; he must learn to separate himself from that, from the whole desire-nature; and he must say to the desire-nature:

"That is not I"; and once again he must say it by life as well as lips.

Then he must learn to say of *the ever-wandering and vagrant mind:* "This is not I": and he must learn this by concentration, by meditation, by the fixing of the thoughts, and thus free himself from its bondage.

And then comes *the body of knowledge*, as it is called Buddhi, the Pure Reason; he must learn to say of this: "This is not I," great as it is called.

Then he obtains the *body of Atma, Aham*, which is the place of joy; and even of that he must say: "This also is not I," for the "I" must go. The time comes when he says only:

"The Self is all."

143.

And similarly to these outlines of the *Taittiriya*, it is said in the *Kathopanishat:*

"Let the wise subdue his speech by mind (manas); subdue his mind by reason (buddhi); subdue his reason by the great (atma); subdue this in the peaceful (monad)."

Higher than the Monad is only Ishvara, the Purusha; "than this naught is higher; He is the last limit, He the Supreme Goal." These are the stages.

144.

Free yourself from the senses by identifying yourself with the mind.

Then repudiate the mind by identifying yourself with Buddhi, the Reason.

Then repudiate Buddhi and identify yourself with Atma.

Repudiate even that as a shadow, and identify yourself with the Monad, the true Jivatma.

And then, casting that away, identify yourself with Ishvara, the Supreme. It is written that when a man beholds Ishvara, "he obtains the highest identity."

Pages 96 to 99.

145.

Thus, step by step, strive to pierce into your Self, and *if you would begin the search, begin with everyday life.*

You have a tongue, sight, hearing. *Dominate the tongue,* and let it never speak an unkind or untrue word; no harsh language, no sharp criticism, no claim to judge your brother, no claim to condemn.

* * * * *

Master the eye and ear, teaching the eye to see the Self, and not the Maya which encompasses it, to pierce through the Maya which surrounds your brother, and see behind it the Self, who "makes his own path, according to the Word."

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"The Wisdom of the Upanishats,"
pages 100 and 101.

146.

True will-power consists in overcoming the irritabilities, follies, rash impulses, and moral lapses which accompany the daily life of the individual, and which are apt to manifest themselves on every slight provocation; and in developing calmness, self-possession, and dispassionate action in the press and heat of worldly duties, and in the midst of the passionate and unbalanced throng. Any thing short of this is not true power, and this can only be developed along the normal pathway of

steady growth in executing even more and more masterfully, unselfishly, and perfectly the daily round of legitimate tasks and pressing obligations.

* * * * *

There is no way to strength and wisdom but by acting strongly and wisely in the present moment, and each present moment reveals its own task.

JAMES ALLEN'S
"Byeways of Blessedness,"
pages 21 and 23.

147.

The greater things you can begin to do afterwards. Do these smaller things first; for what is the use of talking of the higher path, when the first steps in the lower are not yet taken? Therefore is it written,

"Let a man cease from evil ways." Until he does so cease, his eyes are blinded, and he cannot see.

148.

A man must curb his tongue. He who likes to hear unkind criticism, and cruel gossip, and who will not see the Self in all, cannot expect that the Shadow will begin to fall away, and allow the glory of the Self to be a little more visible.

149.

It matters enormously how you think.

If you think falsely, you will act mistakenly; if you think basely, your conduct will suit your thinking.

So think your noblest, your highest, your purest. Think the best you can and not the worst.

Aim high, for the higher the arrow is aimed, the higher the mark it hits. Keep your ideals lofty, while you keep your

judgment of others charitable; and your ideals shall lift you, and your charity shall raise your fallen brother. For never yet did a man rise by being trampled on. Man only rises by being loved in the midst of his sins and follies, and as we deal with our brethren, so do Those who are above us deal with our outer selves.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"The Wisdom of the Upanishats,"
page 103.

150.

Raja Yoga.

Raja Yoga starts with thought, with a process of meditation; and before that process of meditation, which is the beginning of the Raja Yoga, there is a preliminary course to be followed by the man desiring to practise.

He must to a certain extent have purified his physical body, not because he is going to use that body to stimulate the astral, but because as the powers of the consciousness grow, they will work down to the physical body, and unless it be prepared to receive their workings it is likely to be injured, and hysteria, diseases of all kinds, breakdown of the physical health, sometimes even lunacy may result. * *

151.

The purification of the body is effected by an elaborate system of food, drink, sleep, and so on, *of which the central note is moderation*—not starvation, not lying awake so that the nerves are overstrained, but moderation in everything.

152.

The kind of food the Raja Yogi takes is to be *Satvic*, a term generally translated "pure," but which, I think, is better

translated "rhythmic"; that is to say, food in which the vibrations are regular, harmonious, balanced.

* * * * *

153.

The next step is the complete mastery of the emotions, so that a man may never be carried away by them. A man must have made some advancement along this line before it is thought safe to teach him the methods of Yoga itself.

154.

When he has thus partly purified his body, and learned to control his emotions, there comes in *the training of the mind*, the "great enemy" as they call it; because all the ordinary use of the mind is to run out to the outer world, and that mind is usually regarded as the best which moves most rapidly from one thing to another, which is able to grasp one thing and then turn to another, and so on. Now these qualities are exceedingly hindering when you come to the evolution of the higher consciousness which demands the quieting of the mind, in order that it may shine forth.

155.

So his practice consists partly in *the steadying of the mind, which is done by the use of the imagination to a large extent, a mental picture being formed, and the attention fixed on it;* then withdrawn from all the picture but one point, and fixed on that; that point being finally dropped so that the mind remains absolutely still.

The first result of trying to fix the mind is to discover that it is much more restless than you thought it was. A mind which thought itself fairly steady is found to be restless, and all over the place, when it is ordered to fix itself on a thing

which does not attract it. Then again you must practise this for years before you get a really satisfactory result, and that is a thing which seems rather long to the hurrying and busy life we find here in the West.

When the mind has grown fairly steady, so that it can be reduced to quietude, and kept there without thinking, then comes the time when the higher consciousness asserts itself, and with that one enters on the real practice of Yoga.

156.

In addition to the fixing and gradual emptying of the mind in this way, there will be considerable practice simply in concentration, keeping the mind on a single thought, not so much now on a mental picture, as on an idea, and, as it were, sucking out of that idea everything it has in it, by a curious process in which the idea takes possession of the man.

157.

What really happens is that *the mental body moulds itself into the form of the idea*, so that the idea becomes part of the mental body of the thinker; and when he can do that those fixed thoughts mould and shape and create the organs in the mental body necessary for the work he has to do.

158.

When those organs are partially developed, then the thought-power comes down through them on to the astral, and builds there again the organs that it requires.

159.

You see you are coming down, along the true line of evolution—the higher builds the lower—and this more highly developed consciousness having shaped the mental body, proceeds to the shaping of the astral; and as the man proceeds with his

meditation and concentration day by day, the thought comes down on to the physical plane, and shapes the brain also for the expression of the higher powers.

And when the thought-currents at last pour down, *they find an instrument which is able to vibrate without injury;* and in addition to that the whole of the man's previous thinking has improved the cells of the brain, has enlarged them and made them very much more complex, creating a better instrument both in the organisation of the cells by the whole course of thinking, and by the power of vibrating to the subtler currents when they come down from the higher planes.

Now, that is the practice of Raja Yoga put in a general way.

160.

Laborious, difficult, demanding a great sacrifice of time and labour, *it must become the first thing in life ere one can expect success. * * The man who would really be a Raja Yogi must make it the object of his life.*

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"Theosophy and the New Psychology,"
pages 128 to 132.

161.

Now, how shall the bodies be shaped to the needs of the Higher consciousness?

By *gradually refining them* and bringing them under the control of the Higher; and hence *Meditation is ordained as the means.*

But where a man wished to make very rapid progress, it was found easier to go to the jungle and temporarily isolate himself from the lower world. Thus he escaped the coarser magnetisms of the outer world, and put himself in a place in which the rougher vibrations did not reach him; hence, he was

less likely to be upset by these harsher and rougher vibrations. There in the jungles and forests such men began to meditate.

They made the brain tense and refined by the concentration of the mind, by the gradual restraint of the lower faculties, and fixed it in rapt attention on the higher.

The consciousness working from above played on the physical brain through this fixed attention, and gradually made it more tense, and tuned it to respond safely to the higher vibrations. Then it strove to draw the lower upwards, *until it answered no longer to the stimuli of the outer world.*

162.

The next step, after closing the senses, was to hold quiet the powers of the mind, to make the mind steady, so that it might cease vibrating and become still, able to answer to vibrations coming from above.

When the mind was made tranquil and quiet, when no desire was allowed to trouble its serenity, as a lake in perfect calm, on that mind at peace was thrown the reflection of the Self; the man saw in the tranquillity of the mind and the silence of the senses, the Majesty, the glory of the Self.

That is the Eastern way.

163.

Let us understand from this standpoint how the brain has to be changed, how it has to be refined, and how it has to be improved, how all its connecting links have to be fashioned and manufactured for the purposes of the expression of the Higher Consciousness. Following along this line of self-discipline, or Yoga, what are the conditions of brain evolution?

First, *purity of body.*

Secondly, *refinement of body, and increased complexity of brain.*

These are essential. Do not suppose that *while your passions are still ruling you, whilst their demands can upset the mind, whilst the body is unrestrained*, that you are ready to receive on the mind the reflection of the Self.

You must *learn to rule the body, to keep it under control*, by giving it proper sleep, and proper exercise, and proper food, satisfying all its needs, so as to keep it in health, not as a master, but as the obedient servant of consciousness.

Hear what Shri Krishna says: "Verily, Yoga is not for him who eateth too much, nor who abstaineth to excess, nor who is addicted to too much sleep, nor even to wakefulness, O Arjuna." *There is to be no extreme on either side;* no torturing of the body that is to be the instrument but *also no yielding to the body that it may imagine itself the master of the Soul.*

Where this training is followed, the brain becomes able to receive the subtler vibrations, without loss of equilibrium, and health is not sacrificed to gain delicacy and sensitiveness. The Yogi is most exquisitely sensitive, but perfectly sane.

164.

Having *controlled and purified the body*, we make it sensitive to the higher vibrations, responsive to the sounding of the sublimer notes.

But to do this *we must lose our interest in the lower, and become indifferent to the attractions of the outer life.*

Vairagya, dispassion, we must have, for that is a condition of the Higher Consciousness revealing itself in the lower world.

While you love the lower things of the world, the Higher Consciousness cannot use this Upâdhi as its vehicle.

One pointed devotion to the Supreme, a clear, well-balanced, intelligent development of the intellect and emotions, this is the road along which we must tread, if the Higher Consciousness is to be manifested on earth.

We must be pure in life, compassionate and tender;

We must learn to see the Self in every one around us, in the ugly as well as in the beautiful, in the low as well as in the high, in the plant as well as in the Deva.

He who sees the Self in everything, and all things in the Self, he seeth, verily, he seeth.

MRS. A. BESANT'S

"The Laws of the Higher Life,"

pages 25 to 28.

165.

The process is toilsome and laborious, and demands long perseverance ere much apparent progress is made; but scores upon scores, nay, hundreds upon hundreds, of men and women have pursued it both in the past and in the present, and they bear witness to the results obtained by it.

If complete control be gained over the mind, so that it may be directed unswervingly on a single point, and then dropping that point, can remain poised and steady, the brain still, the senses asleep, then there arises above the horizon of the mind another kind of consciousness, recognised by the thinker as himself, but as himself in a higher condition of being. As he rises into this condition, his powers suddenly enlarge, limitation vanish, a new and keener, subtler life pulses through him, he seems thought rather than thinker.

Problems that puzzled him offer their solution. Questions that were unanswerable are answered simply and clearly; difficulties have vanished; all is luminous.

MRS. A. BESANT'S

"Some Problems of Life,"

pages 89 and 90.

166.

" That blessed mood,
In which *the burthen of the mystery,*
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened:—that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,—
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul;
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things."

WORDSWORTH.

167.

When you are inviting, as so many are inviting to-day, the downflow of the super-consciousness into the waking-consciousness, *take care as to the purity of the vessels into which that water of life is to flow.*

It was once said by a Great Teacher that just as the purest water becomes polluted and muddy when it flows into vessels that are foul, so is the Divine Wisdom defiled when it flows into minds that are unprepared, into hearts that are impure.

Certainly strive to bring within your being the downflow from higher planes; certainly strive to open up the whole of your nature to the rays of sunshine which come from those loftier regions; but beware, in inviting that fecundating force of the sunlight, that there are no seeds of foulness within your nature, which may be quickened into growth when the sunlight fall upon them.

Beware that you purify the nature before you invite the inflow of the higher forces.

Hence, has it been said to candidates for the higher teaching: "First, cease from evil."

Until you have ceased from evil, the less of the higher life that flows into you the better.

After you have ceased to do evil, begin the control of the senses.

Subject them absolutely to the mastery of the mind; then bring the mind under the control of the higher mind, and make the wanderings and errancies of the lower mind quiet and still, under the influence of the higher.

168.

Only when the man has thus purified the vehicles, only in the tranquillity of the sense and the silence of the mind, can he see with safety the glory of the Self.

* * * *

169.

Climb! climb as you will, with full courage, with steady heart, with open eyes, fearlessly, without dread of aught that you may meet; for the Divine within you is stronger than aught that is without you. But as you climb the ladder, *take care that the feet are clean with which you climb. Cleanse the feet before you climb the ladder*, and do not soil its rungs with the mire of earth; for that will make your feet cling to the ladder, will prevent the climbing, or even make you slip and fall.

170.

Climb as you will; but remember that *only to the pure is the vision of the Divine vouchsafed.* Climb as you will; but remember that the superconsciousness must come down into a waking-consciousness that is pure. If you purify it, then climb onwards swiftly as your courage can carry you, swiftly as your enthusiasm can raise you; for to the pure there is no danger in

any world, and to the heart that is pure will all nature's secrets be unveiled.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"Theosophy and the New Psychology,"
pages 71 and 72.

171

"Pure food, pure mind, and constant memory of God"—that is the law of life for the would-be Bhakta—not for him who has already attained devotion, but for one who desires to attain it.

172.

The would-be Bhakta must practise freedom from desire—his only desire must be fixed on God, his only longing must be directed to God, *there must be no room for any other desire in his heart.*

173.

Then he must practise turning his thoughts to God. This is to be a constant thing. As he tries this concentration he will find that his mind will wander away, will go after other objects; it will wander away from the one Supreme Object, and seek other things upon which to rest. But has not the Lord of Yoga said, in answer to the complaint of Arjuna, that the mind was restless as the wind and as difficult to subdue, has He not answered—"*It may be curbed by constant practice?*" The would-be devotee, therefore, should practice constantly to turn his mind to God.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"The Three Paths,"
page 61.

174.

The Self without must vanish before the Self within is realised.

175.

You may make many blunders, for the Self is embodied—mistakes belong to the body; and remember that they are of the body, not of the spirit within, and by the suffering which follows those very mistakes, *the grosser matter is burned up*, and the Self becomes more manifest.

Go on fighting, struggling, full of courage, with brave and undaunted heart, and at the end of your battle of Kurukshetra, for you too shall dawn the Self in His Majesty, destroyed shall be your delusion also, and you shall see your Lord as He is.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"Hints on the Study of the Bhagavad Gita,"
pages 32 and 33.

176.

In the path of spiritual aspiration, *we must not expect to find the way easy and plain;* for the spiritual life is not obtained *save by repeated endeavour and constant failure*, and the path of duty is not found but by *undaunted perseverance.*

Let us but desire to know the right, and we shall surely know it, no matter by what path of anguish the right is to be found. *In our daily life, let us practise to do the right, as far as we see it, and we shall see more clearly as we proceed.* * *

177.

The difficulty is in us and not outside of us. It is here in our lives and our own conduct that the spiritual evolution must be made.

178.

Every Scripture declares that the Heart of the Divine Life is Infinite Compassion. Compassionate then must be the spiritual man.

Let us, in our poor measure, in our tiny cups of love, give to our fellowmen one drop of the Ocean of Compassion in which the universe is bathed.

You never can be wrong in helping your brother and in putting your own needs behind the supplying of his wants.

That, and that alone, is true spirituality, and it means coming back to the point from which we started.

It means the recognition of one self in all. The spiritual man must lead a higher life than the life of altruism. He must lead the life of *self-identification with all that lives and moves.*

There is no "other" in the world; we are all one. Each is a separate form, but one spirit moves and lives in all.

179.

Listen to what spoke the Divine Love, Shri Krishna, when looking over the world of men, He passed His Divine verdict on the righteous and the sinful:

"*If the most sinful worship me,*" said He, "*with undivided heart, he too must be accounted righteous, for he hath rightly resolved;* speedily he becometh dutiful and goeth to Eternal Peace. O *Kaunteya*, know thou certainly that My devotee perisheth never."

Resolve rightly, then, and no fear need enter your heart. You may blunder, you may make errors, you may fall over and over again; but speedily you will become dutiful, and go to Eternal Peace.

Let us give devotion, then, to the Supreme Love. Let us recognise our oneness in Him, and therefore our oneness with

each other; and because we have rightly resolved, though we have weaknesses and faults, there is the promise of Truth itself, speedily we shall become dutiful, and go to Peace.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"The Laws of the Higher Life,"
pages 42 to 47.

180.

"There is no suffering for him who has finished his journey, and abandoned grief, *who has freed himself on all sides and thrown off all fetters.*"

Such is the Arhat who stands at the Summit of the Path; such is the one who has one step more to take and then shall have nothing more to learn; such the Goal and the Path that all may tread; such is the ending of the struggle, and the ending is Perfect Peace. * * *

181.

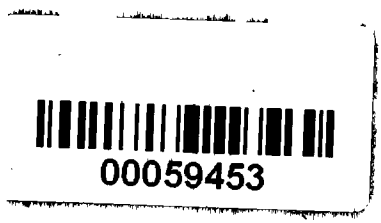
On this Path each step that is taken is a step that is taken for ever; each pain that is suffered on it is a pain which, if it is felt, is welcome because of the lesson it gives.

And in treading this Path *it grows brighter as ignorance lessens, it grows more peaceful as weakness vanishes, it grows serener as the vibrations of earth have less power to jar and disturb.* What it is in its ending, those only can tell who have ended; what it is at its goal, those only may know who stand there. But even those who are treading its earlier stages know that its sorrow is joy as compared with the joy of earth, and the very smallest of its flowers is worth every jewel that earth could give. One gleam of the Light which shines always upon it and that grows ever brighter as the disciple treads onwards, one gleam of that makes all earth's sunshine but as darkness; they who tread it know the peace that passeth understanding,

the joy that earthly sorrow can never take away, the rest that is on the rock that no earthquake may shiver, the place within the Temple where for ever there is bliss.

MRS. A. BESANT'S
"In the Outer Court,"
pages 162 to 164.

THE END.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